

2004 Report of Accomplishments Columbia Conservation District



Natural Resource Improvements in 2004 - Summary

- Returned 7.888 cfs and 372.88 acre feet to an instream usage for 4 ESA listed fish species
- Protected an additional 7.75 miles of ESA listed streams through CREP
- Installed BMP's to retain 14,169 tons of soil at its source resulting in reduced sediment embediness and fines in spawning gravels of Streams home to 4 ESA listed species.
- Reached 800 individuals through educational programs
- Reduced eminent threat by installing 38 compliant fish screens with flow meters for producers.
- Led or participated in 9 separate state and regional planning efforts.



Switch to efficient pivot system to return water to the stream.

Vision of the Columbia Conservation District

- Columbia County residents will be enabled to implement stewardship of our natural resources through voluntary practices without compromise of economic viability or social standards of the region.

Mission of the Columbia Conservation District

- Provide the needed support to Columbia County residents so that their activities will enhance the regions natural resources while protecting and promoting their health, safety and social values.

Water Quality Implementation

- Completed the final rotation in a 3-year direct seed contract encompassing 150 acres with a soil savings of 7,650 ton over the life of the contract. Benefits include soil retention at the source, reduction of sediment transport to and within ESA species listed streams, reduction of nutrient levels, and potential reduction of long-term water temperature.
- Installed 5 upland sediment control structures draining 574 acres with a potential soil erosion savings of 6,519 tons.

Basic Funding

- Used to support environmental youth education, production agriculture field days, and education days.
- Provide funding for basic district operations and office support for program implementation.

Local Funding

- Currently Columbia Conservation District's only local funding source is from issuing agricultural field burn permits. This program supports the utilization of burning as a management tool for cereal crop producers. Burning provides for continuous crop rotations without inversion tillage thereby retaining sediments at their source and minimizing sediment transport to surface waters resulting in improved water quality. This service is provided at the request of producers and in support of a proven soil retention farming practice.

Professional Engineering

- Survey assistance to the Dayton East End Irrigation Ditch. Ditch installed 2,200 feet of new enclosed pipeline to reduced conveyance loss.
- Scoped, assessed and surveyed for 1 private off-river livestock water system. Design work currently underway.
- Scoped, assessed, surveyed, designed, and inspected a culvert installation under the EQIP program.

Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)

- Signed 8 new contracts (CRP1) on 194.9 acres and 7.75 miles of ESA species listed streams.
- Practice installation included 56.8 acres of conservation cover, 6,928 feet of fence, 30,310 trees planted, and one livestock water system.
- Work continues on interest/intent sign-ups (CRP2).
- Benefits are a reduction in stream bank erosion, fecal coliform levels, and nutrient pollutants while increasing riparian filtration function, canopy cover (potential reduction in long term water temperature), large woody material recruitment, and floodplain connectivity.

Irrigation Efficiencies

- Completed installation of our first project returning 6.4 cfs and 243 acre feet to the Tucannon River for an instream use via the Washington Water Trust. Project allows for abandonment of a 2.75-mile diversion ditch, completely eliminates 2 diversion points, and covers 300 acres of production ground.
- Contracted a second project, which will return 1.488 cfs and 130.88 acre feet to the Tucannon River for an instream use. Project allows for abandonment of three diversion ditches, a 1714 ft., a 710 ft., and a 640 ft. ditch. Project encompasses 234 acres of production cropland.

Watershed Conservation/Habitat Restoration

- Cost shared 38 NOAA Fisheries, USF&WS, and WDFW compliant water withdrawal screens affectively reducing potential for “take”. Accomplished with a combination of funding from SRFB, BPA, and water user.
- Cost shared 42 WDOE flow meters on water withdrawals. Water users report directly to WDOE. Accomplished with a combination of funding from WDOE and water user.
- Created a fair booth display on fish screens and meters. Fair attendance was estimated at 2300.

Community Collaboration & Coordination

- Led process to complete and submit the May 2004 version of the Tucannon Subbasin Plan for the Northwest Power and Conservation Council (NPCC).
- Contributed to and participated in the development of the May 2004 version of the Walla Walla Subbasin Plan for the NPCC.
- Facilitated and/or participated with active local citizenry involvement in HB 2496 Lead Entity for WRIA’s 32 & 35; SE Regional Salmon Board; HB2514 Watershed Planning for WRIA’s 32 & 35; WCC & DOE Livestock Influenced Water Quality Task Force; WCC CREP Task Force; BPA Process Improvement Effort Core Team.
- All efforts are designed to identify resource needs and future potential project implementation.

Information & Education

- Conducted an annual Winter Education Day attended by 113 producers on current issues in conservation and economics of production agriculture.
- Conducted a spring BMP tour involving 38 producers to view current production trends.
- Provide Soil Stewardship curriculum to 349 K through 5th grade age students.
- Provide material support for 64 6th graders that attended Wooten Environmental Camp.
- Provided material support for the Salmon in the Classroom reaching 214 elementary students on salmonid lifecycle and management.
- Conduct a fall Supervisor Tour to keep supervisors updated on production issues and potential local concerns.

Washington Conservation Districts assisting land managers with their conservation choices

